



May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago. The Civic Committee is a non-profit organization comprised of the chief executives of the Chicago region's major employers and civic institutions. Our mission is to make the Chicago region a great place for everyone to live, work, and conduct business.

The Civic Committee is fully supportive of IDOT's applications for the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity (MPDG) and Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program funding on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program. These grants will fund the next phase of the 75<sup>th</sup> Street Comprehensive Improvement Project (CIP), a suite of projects to unsnarl the largest freight bottleneck in North America.

A quarter of all U.S. freight rail traffic originates, terminates, or passes through the Chicago area, and this volume is expected to more than double by 2040. Freight rail traffic has been, and will continue to be, clogged in Chicago, which will hurt our country's international competitiveness if we do nothing. We must act decisively as a region and nation to ensure that the freight rail growth enhances, rather than impairs, our economy and quality of life. The 75th Street CIP is the most important investment that we can make toward this end.

Our support for this application is part of the Civic Committee's commitment to ensuring that our region and our nation's freight rail system provide strong support to our nation's economy. The majority of our members are senior business leaders with national and/or international businesses. They fully understand that the 75th Street CIP is critical to the ongoing business operations of their respective firms.

The Civic Committee appreciates your dedication to improving our national rail network and looks forward to working with you to support programs like CREATE that help us move products across the U.S. efficiently and cost-effectively.

Sincerely,

Derek Douglas  
President  
Civic Committee and Commercial Club of Chicago